



Senator Ted W. Lieu

28th Senate District

SB 1388

Human Trafficking Penalties and Victim Fund - Senators Hill and Mitchell

Principal Co-author Senator Huff

Purpose:

This bill seeks to increase resources and revenues to better fund services for victims of sex trafficking. This bill would also strengthen criminal penalties against sex buyers, a.k.a., “johns.”

Background:

Every day, children – both boys and girls – as young as 8 years old are being coerced and sold into prostitution in Los Angeles County and in counties throughout the state. Often times, the child is living in poverty or in the foster care system. Or, these children are kidnapped, drugged and forced into the sex-trade industry. These vulnerable children are easy to target for commercial sex trafficking as pimps can easily lure these children into the industry with promises of protection, material goods and money. Many of these young victims, due to the trauma they experience and the influence pimps exert, remain in the commercial sex trade well after they become adults.

Young girls and boys who are victims of sex trafficking are often arrested and prosecuted for prostitution-related offenses without acknowledgment of their age because child sex trafficking is the most under-recognized form of child abuse in our country. In addition, the pimps who engage in the sex trafficking of children and the consumers (aka, sex buyers) who solicit sex from these minors often face minimal penalties and fines. Frequently, sex buyers are not arrested and prosecuted even though child sex trafficking is not consensual sex - it is child molestation and rape.

According to experts, the average life expectancy of these children once they enter the sex trade is seven years, due to the ravages of HIV/AIDs and the violence to which they are constantly subjected. In addition, these children can fall victim to lifecycles of crime and without adequate public safety nets, are more prone to engage in criminal activity into adulthood. Ultimately, counties are overwhelmed by the entire industry of crime perpetuated by the sex trafficking trade which puts a strain on already scarce public safety resources. Very little funding is available for intervention and victim counseling programs.

Solution:

Senate Bill 1388 addresses a few oversights in California’s sexual exploitation law and ensures that individuals convicted of pimping or soliciting a minor will face significant financial penalties, and thus serve as a deterrent against prostituting children. This measure further specifies that funds collected as a result of these fines go directly to support services and counseling for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

Specifically, SB 1388 increases the fine up to \$25,000 for conviction of pimping of a minor. SB 1388 would also increase fines (up to \$10,000) for any “john” convicted of soliciting prostitution from a minor. SB 1388 will also provide for a minimum mandatory hold of 48-hours to a year in county jail for convicted johns who knew, or should have known, that they solicited a minor for prostitution.

Status: Assembly Public Safety Committee 6-0* (final vote pending)

Support:

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Sponsor
City of Los Angeles, Mayor Garcetti
California Police Chiefs
California State Sheriffs’ Association
California Narcotics Officers’ Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC)
AFSCME
Alameda County District Attorney O’Malley
Los Angeles Professional Peace Officers Association
California Fraternal Order of Police
Long Beach Police Officers Association
Sacramento County Deputy Sheriffs Association
Concerned Women for America
Freedom From Exploitation
California Catholic Conference, Inc.
Los Angeles Police Protective League
Los Angeles Probation Officers Union, AFSCME Local #685
Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs
Riverside Sheriff’s Association
Soroptimist International of Vista
Soroptimists Together Against Trafficking



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Laura's House

Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse

Journey Community Church

Red Window Project

Surviving Parents Coalition

The Joyful Child Foundation

MISSEY

First United Methodist Women of Escondido

Church State Council

Mary Magdalene Project

Grandma's House of Hope

Survivors for Solutions

Without Permission

The Guadalupe Art Program

Christians Against Slavery

Bridge Network

CASH Community against Sexual Harm

The Association For the Recovery of Children

Domestic Violence Center of Santa Clarita Valley

The A21 Campaign

Gems Uncovered

Junior Leagues of California

City of Vista

Safety Corridor Coalition

The United Nations Association of the United States

New Directions for Women

Generate Hope

Urban Counties Caucus

City of Long Beach

Truckers against Trafficking

Equality Now

Oppose:

California Attorneys for Criminal Justice

California Public Defenders Association

Erotic Services Providers Union

Rebecca Rosenberg (Victim, Alameda County)

Transgender Law Center

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